

PRESENTS

COMMENCEMENT CONCERT

with

The University Symphony Orchestra

Soloists, and Combined Choirs

Dwight Gustafson, Conductor

Fanfare from LA PERI .... *Paul Dukas*
(1865–1935)

University Brass Choir

Best known for his orchestral work THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE, the French composer Paul Dukas was also a gifted writer and music critic. He was perhaps severest in his criticism of his own music, destroying much of what he had composed. One of the fortunate works to survive is the ballet LA PERI. The story tells of a Persian king who searches the world for the flower of immortality and finds it in the hand of the sleeping Peri, a type of Persian fairy. When the king removes the flower, she awakens and dances so exquisitely that he gives it back to her. When he does, she vanishes and he feels the chill of death coming upon him.

The Fanfare, which precedes the ballet, reveals not only the dramatic potential of the legend and the rhythms of the Peri's dance but also Dukas's ability to handle the various colors and combinations of brass instruments.

Scherzo, Opus 87 .... *Camille Saint-Saëns*
(1835–1921)
arr. Anne Morton

Matt Edwards, Geraldine Gentile,
Walter Hundt, Susan Kindall

Camille Saint-Saëns's versatility and prolificacy of composition are well remembered, for he wrote much in almost every medium. Happily, he took an interest in composing for two pianos as well and is considered to be one of the best duo-piano composers.

His Scherzo for two pianos, Opus 87, written in 1889, reflects his own virtuosity at the piano, requiring facile scales, taxing chords, and fleet octave passages. The suave melodies of the Scherzo exemplify his striving for musical objectivity and his satisfaction with "elegant lines, harmonious colors, and a fine series of chords." Anne Morton's effective rearrangement for four pianos places the melodic material quadraphonically.

Brass Symphony, Opus 80 .... *Jan Koetsier*
(b. 1911)

Allegro
Rondo: presto

The prolific Dutch composer Jan Koetsier was trained in Berlin. After serving as conductor in Amsterdam, he returned to Germany as the conductor of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and remained in that capacity until his retirement. Koetsier's many works for orchestra and chamber groups show the influence of Hindemith in

their avowed tonality, their neo-Baroque effects of antiphony and counterpoint, and their polished craftsmanship.

The first movement of his Brass Symphony is obviously neo-Baroque, with its imitative counterpoint, constantly moving accompaniment, and brash trills. The flashes of melody exchanged between the instruments provide a virtual kaleidoscope of brass timbres. The last movement gives the feeling of perpetual motion, with bright sounds, fast pacing, and rapid, repeated notes. The march-like theme builds in increasing dissonance until the final climax.

Finale (Sextet) from Act I, COSI FAN TUTTE .... *W. A. Mozart*
(1756–1791)

Pam Dunbar, Jean Greer, Christa Habegger,
David Parker, Kenneth Prewitt, John Skinner
Lance Flower, accompanist

COSI FAN TUTTE (Thus do they all) was Mozart's last comic opera and was produced in Vienna in 1790. The libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte recycles a standard formula for comic operas: two pairs of lovers, a case of mistaken identities, a busybody of a maid, and a meddlesome old cynic. The Finale to Act I of COSI FAN TUTTE employs all six characters and, through the disguise of the maid, adds a seventh. This famous sextet succeeds not only in contrasting all the personalities and giving their reactions but also in providing wonderful counterpoint by uniting all their melodies into one whole. As one authority expressed it, Mozart is in the "top of his form in this long ensemble."

Fêtes from NOCTURNES .... *Claude Debussy*
(1862–1918)
arr. Anne Morton

Matt Edwards, Geraldine Gentile,
Walter Hundt, Susan Kindall

The composition of NOCTURNES, three tone poems, occupied Debussy for over six years. In writing about this work, Debussy affirmed his connection with painting and art: "Therefore it is not meant to designate the usual form of the nocturne, but rather all the various impressions and the special effects of light that the word suggests." The second of the NOCTURNES, Fêtes, is one of Debussy's most rhythmic, quickly moving works. Concerning it, Debussy wrote, "Fêtes gives us the vibrating atmosphere with sudden flashes of light. There is also the episode of the procession (a dazzling fantastic vision) which passes through the festive scene."

In 1909 Ravel transcribed NOCTURNES for two pianos. In Anne Morton's rearrangement of Fêtes, the material has been redistributed for equal participation in the melodic and technical aspects by all four pianists, providing a colorful and exciting display.

INTERMISSION*

DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NÜRNBERG .... *Richard Wagner* (*1813–1883*)

Dance of the Apprentices and Procession of the Mastersingers

Since the completion of his opera TANNHAÜSER in 1845, Wagner had toyed with the idea of writing an opera on the famous poet-composers who dominated songwriting in Germany from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. These mastersingers had formed guilds in order to preserve and transmit their heritage of song. Act III of DIE MEISTERSINGER takes place in a field outside of town on Midsummer's Day. All the townspeople are gathering for this festive celebration, which will culminate in the famous singing contest. On the river a boat arrives, bringing girls from a nearby town. The apprentices and journeymen rush to the boat to help them land. They then pair off to dance to Wagner's simple, rustic tune—the "only waltz Wagner ever wrote." The dance soon gives way to the procession of the Mastersingers—the judges for the coming contest. The procession begins with the theme of the Mastersingers, the same theme which opens the opera. Wagner also uses two authentic Meistersinger tunes, which he discovered in doing research for the opera. Near the end of the procession, a triangle signals the combining of all three melodies in a display of typical Wagnerian polyphony.

Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra .... *Alexander Arutunian* (*b. 1920*)

Bruce Cox, soloist

Alexander Arutunian studied piano and composition in his native Armenia before going for further training to Moscow, where he became acquainted with leading Russian composers. Returning to his home, he was appointed music director of the Armenian Philharmonic Society and taught composition at his alma mater, the Erevan Conservatory.

His trumpet concerto dates from 1950 and exhibits his predominantly tonal lyricism and his preoccupation with orchestral color. Mildly contemporary, it opens with a trumpet solo in a folklike improvisational style. The rhythmic shifts, syncopations, scales, and instrumentation all reflect its Armenian folk heritage. The slow theme brings to mind Borodin in its instrumental color and interweaving of countermelodies. Arutunian then brings back the first themes, which lead to a brilliant cadenza.

Three Psalms for Chorus, Organ, and Orchestra .... *Dwight Gustafson*
(b. 1930)

Premiere Performance
Text adapted from the King James Version

Psalm 100—O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness, and come before His presence with a song. Know ye that the Lord, He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful to Him, and bless His name.

Psalm 23—The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, tho' I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalm 150—Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary: praise Him in the firmament of His pow'r. Praise Him for His mighty acts: praise Him according to His excellent greatness. Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet: praise Him with the psaltery and harp. Praise Him with the timbrel and dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise Him upon the loud cymbals: praise Him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let ev'ry thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.

These three psalms form an arch in their textual and musical moods, tempos, and melodic material. Psalm 100, "O Be Joyful in the Lord," opens brightly in a paean of praise. Its pandiatonic lyricism, modal melodies, and use of added tones combine in a fresh exuberance, united by orchestral interludes based on the old Genevan Psalter tune "Old Hundredth" (Doxology).

The central psalm, the twenty-third, changes the mood, painting a pastoral scene. The opening passage for unison sopranos declares the intimacy and the surety of "The Lord Is My Shepherd." The orchestral interludes here give reminiscences of the familiar tune "Crimond" from the Scottish Psalter.

Psalm 150 returns to a jubilant spirit and tempo, with an introductory fanfare to the acclamation, "Praise Ye the Lord." Quartal harmonies add their piquancy to this psalm of praise, which once more reinforces the tune "Old Hundredth" in its accompaniment.

Program notes by Karen Wilson

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

The Brass Choir, directed by Brass Department Head Paul Jantz, is composed of students and faculty and is one of four large brass ensembles that represent the department in recitals on campus and on tour. The members of the piano quartet are all piano majors. Three are graduate teaching assistants—Geraldine Gentile, Walter Hundt, and Susan Kindall—and one, Matt Edwards, is a junior. Members of the voice faculty comprise the Mozart sextet, prepared by Ken Prewitt. Lance Flower, their accompanist, teaches piano and heads the Music Theory Department. Trumpet soloist Bruce Cox is director of the Bob Jones Elementary, Junior High, and Academy Bands. This fall he will begin doctoral studies in trumpet performance. Dwight Gustafson's compositions range from choral pieces and shorter instrumental works to larger works for orchestra and chorus and scores for four major films produced by the University's Division of Cinema. Work is now under way on a fifth score for the new feature-length film that is to be premiered later this year.

FOUNDER'S MEMORIAL AMPHITORIUM
May 4, 1990
8:00 p.m.

*Chimes will sound and lobby lights will flash three minutes before the end of intermission. After the houselights are dimmed following intermission, no one will be readmitted to his seat.

Cameras and recording equipment are not permitted in the Amphitorium during any performance.